



Preparedness News and Information

From FEMA's Office of National Preparedness

February 28, 2003

NATIONAL NEWS

Pentagon Buys Protective Suits, Distributes Escape Masks

GovExec, February 21, 2003

The Pentagon has increased the production of new chemical and biological protective suits by more than 10,000 units per month, and will begin distributing emergency escape hoods to building employees this week.

Many Say No to Bush Smallpox Plan

Associated Press, February 23, 2003

Despite President Bush's recommendation, hospitals and health care workers are turning down the smallpox vaccine, worried about the inoculation's side effects and unconvinced that the threat of a bioterror attack justifies the risk.

➤ [CDC Says it Never Aimed for 500,000 Smallpox Vaccinations](#), *GovExec*, Feb 26

New HHS Center Stands Ready to Track Bioterror Attacks

GovExec, February 24, 2003

The Department of Health and Human Services has completed a state-of-the-art command center equipped to handle any bioterrorism or public health emergency with a self-contained ventilation system that allows government officials to take refuge there for an extended period of time.

Ridge Cites Security Progress, Urges States to Share Burden

GovExec, February 24, 2003

In remarks to the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA), Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge cited national efforts to improve security but called on States to help shoulder the financial burden.

➤ [State, Local Officials Seek Better Info From Feds on Terrorist Threats](#), *GovExec*, Feb 26

NSC President Says Firms Should Develop a "Culture of Preparedness"

SafetyNext.com, February 25, 2003

The National Safety Council (NSC) called on all Americans to develop a "culture of preparedness" and to support the development of all-inclusive emergency response plans in businesses and private homes.

Homeland Security Cedes Intelligence Role

GovExec, February 26, 2003

In testimony before the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee Wednesday, Homeland Security Deputy Secretary Gordon England said the new department would not have its own intelligence analysis group.

CONGRESS

House Chairman Plans Aggressive Oversight of Security Agencies

GovExec, February 25, 2003

House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Don Young, R-Alaska, will conduct oversight investigations into a host of key security issues, including the ongoing creation of the Homeland Security Department, efforts to boost aviation security and whether the new emphasis on terrorism has resulted in federal lapses in emergency management and preparedness, among other issues.

- [Senate Appropriations Panel Reorganizes to Accommodate Homeland Security](#), *GovExec*, Feb 26

Bipartisan Group of Senators Bashes FBI, Files Oversight Bill

GovExec, February 25, 2003

Three key senators on judiciary issues on Tuesday blasted the FBI for ongoing failures and introduced a bill to increase congressional oversight of the agency's surveillance activities.

Byrd Criticizes Bush Over First Responder Funds

GovExec, February 25, 2003

Senate Appropriations ranking member Robert Byrd, fired back at the White House Tuesday after President Bush criticized Congress Monday for hamstringing \$3.5 billion in "first responders" money by tying it to already existing grant programs.

RECENT NOMINATIONS

- [Michael F. Byrne](#) was named the first homeland security coordinator for the Washington area.

RECENT BILLS

- **S 427**: A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to assist States and communities in preparing for and responding to threats to the agriculture of the United States, February 24
- **S 430**: A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enhance agricultural biosecurity in the United States through increased prevention, preparation, and response planning, February 24

RECENT HEARINGS

- [Terrorism Response](#), Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, February 25
- [Consolidating Intelligence Analysis: A Review of the President's Proposal to Create a Terrorist Threat Integration Center--Day 2](#), Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, February 26

- [Emergency preparedness at the Indian Point Energy Center](#), House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, February 25

STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

[Michigan's Anti-terror Team Gears Up](#)

Lansing Bureau, February 24, 2003

Michigan's new Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team is looking to conduct training exercises with local police and fire departments.

[Lack of Money Hurting State's Security Upgrades](#)

Lansing State Journal, February 24, 2003

Michigan's budget crunch and lack of federal funding are complicating the state's homeland security efforts.

[Alerts Spur Campus Evacuation Plans](#)

Atlanta Journal Constitution, February 24, 2003

As the country continues to hang in what seems like a perpetual state of high alert, Georgia's college and universities have stepped up efforts to instantly communicate with their campus populations.

[Chiefs Stress Preparedness: Emergency Planning Just as Important in Case of Severe Weather](#)

Milford Daily News, February 23, 2003

Residents should consider how they handled the more than 2 feet of snow dumped on the Milford area Monday to determine how prepared they would be for a natural or man-made disaster, according to Franklin Fire Chief Gary McCarraher.

[The Best Way to Prepare: Get Training](#)

Monterey Herald, February 23, 2003

Training is the best way to prepare to meet any emergency: terrorist attack, accident or natural disaster, according to public safety officials and the American Red Cross.

[Local School Districts Try to Prepare for Possible Terrorist Attacks](#)

Daily Local News, February 23, 2003

Despite questions school officials may have, many districts already have in place comprehensive safety and emergency response plans, and said that they are doing what they can to prepare, or reassure themselves that they are ready to respond in an emergency.

[Agencies Working to Boost Security](#)

Washington Post, February 23, 2003

The recent terror alert has local emergency management officials planning for the worst, and they say they have been in constant contact with sheriff's offices, Maryland State

Police, fire departments, hospitals and major business institutions such as the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant.

FEMA Study Falls Short, Indian Point Opponents Say

NY Times, February 23, 2003

Proponents of closing the Indian Point power plant claimed a modest victory yesterday with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's decision to withhold its endorsement of emergency plans at the nuclear plant.

➤ [FEMA Says it Can't Approve Emergency Plan or Indian Point](#), *NY Times*, Feb 22

More Than Gas Masks Needed for Police, Mrs. Clinton Says

NY Times, February 25, 2003

Congress has appropriated \$4 million to help the New York Police Department pay for protective equipment, including gas masks, but Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and union and police officials said yesterday that the police needed several hundred million dollars more to help prepare for and respond to a possible terrorist attack.

Public Safety Officials Talk About Disasters

Pasadena Star News, February 24, 2003

Many of the steps people should take to prepare for chemical, radiological or biological attacks are no different from preparing for an earthquake according to Pasadena public officials.

Hart Questions Denver's Terror Preparedness

Denver Post, February 25, 2003

Former U.S. Sen. Gary Hart questioned Monday whether Denver was adequately prepared for a possible terrorist attack, especially because the Mile High City could be considered a credible target.

Nursing Students Get Crash Course in Bioterrorism

Louisiana Advertiser, February 25, 2003

Louisiana's Department of Health and Hospitals is working with other state and national emergency preparedness agencies to prepare for a bioterrorism attack, which will require a strong working relationship between state and national officials.

RELATED INFORMATION

RECENT REPORTS

- [POTENTIAL TERRORIST ATTACKS, Additional Actions Needed to Better Prepare Critical Financial Market Participants](#), GAO-03-251-February 2003

The information contained in this newsletter was collected from Internet sources. Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the official position of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Office of National Preparedness.